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## **The Reptilia of Albania: Species composition, distribution, habitats**

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**Abstract.** From 1976 till 1991 information on the distribution of reptiles in Albania was collected systematically, and supplementary data have since been added. Of the 37 species found in Albania fifteen occur all over the country, although seven of them are very rare in the Mediterranean hilly climate zone. Eleven species have a limited range and live mostly in the lowland and the hilly zone along the Adriatic and Ionian coast, as well as in the valleys of the rivers flowing into these seas. The other species are locally distributed.

**Key words.** Reptilia, Albania, distribution.

### **Introduction**

This paper refers to data on the reptilian fauna of Albania collected during extensive field work. Most of the studies and publications of Albanian specialists have been made after the year 1975 (Haxhiu 1979, 1980, 1981, 1985, 1989, 1992, 1995; Haxhiu & Koni, in press), with only one previous publication (Zeko & Puzanov 1960).

Some foreign authors have published brief reports after their excursions in Albania (De Fejervary 1923; Frommhold 1959) or have published articles without having observed the reptiles themselves and refer to other authors (Bruno 1988, 1989; Calabresi 1932; Dimovski 1959, 1964). Conclusions about the situation in Albania have also been drawn from material deposited in museums (Gayda 1940; Kopstein & Wettstein 1921; Cei 1943).

Here the results of 15 years of observations in many regions of Albania are presented in order to document information on the number of reptilian species that are native in this country. The report includes details of the geographical distribution of the species and mentions special biological and zoogeographical data of interest.

### **Materials and methods**

This work is based on field observations made in the years 1976–1991 in the course of numerous expeditions in many areas of Albania. During this extensive survey of the country, from the lowlands to mountain regions at altitudes up to 2000 m, a number of specimens have been collected and examined morphometrically. The paper also incorporates the findings of 20 collaborators who, by their practical work towards a diploma, have contributed much to the knowledge of the Albanian herpetofauna.

In these expeditions, altogether amounting to about 1000 days of observation, we took detailed notes in the field about the biotope of each species — its location, altitude, vegetation and exposure of the terrain — and collected data on the geographic distribution, the reproductive period and its dependence on climate and altitude, as well as the food preferences and the period of lethargy. For the species recorded here, the Albanian name is also given.

Examples of all the species found in Albania have been collected and preserved. The specimens have been deposited in the Museum of Natural Sciences at the University of Tirana.

## Results

### Landscape and climate

The variety of species of reptiles occurring in Albania, in a small geographical area, is greater than in other countries of Europe. This is due to the diversity of the climate in Albania, which is affected by the Mediterranean lowland climate, Mediterranean hilly climate, Mediterranean premountain climate and Mediterranean mountain climate, as well as to the varied terrain, with fields, marshes, hills, rivers, brooks, valleys, a great number of lakes, and mountains that may be densely or sparsely forested, with numerous meadows, or rocky with little or no vegetation. For details of the climatic conditions in Albania see Haxhiu (1994).

### The Reptilia

#### Testudines

##### Emydidae

##### *Emys orbicularis* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Breshke uji, Breshkujce

Widespread in Albania; in the plains and hilly zone up to the altitude of 1000 m. Here it lives in three climatic zones (Fig. 1). It occurs in various watery surroundings such as swamps, canals, pools, streams, water reservoirs, freshwater lakes as well as in brackish ponds (Lezha, Shengjin) near the sea. It prefers places rich in aquatic plants.

Localities: 1 Shkoder, 2, 3 Liqeni i Shkodres, 4 Lumi Drin, 5 Buna, 6 Bushat, 7 Velipoje, 8 Vau i Dejes, 9 Barbullush, 10 Lezhe, 11 Torovice, 12 Tale, 13 Zejmen, 14 Tropoje, 15 Kukes, 16 Peshkopi, 17 Rreshen, 18 Burrel, 19 Milot, 20 Bregu i Matit, 21 Laç, 22 Patok, 23 Mamurras, 24 Fushe Kruje, 25 Ishem, 26 Manez, 27 Katundi i Ri, 28 Hamalle, 29 Rrushkull, 30 Shijak, 31 Vore, 32 Valias, 33 Kamez, 34 Yzberisht, 35 Petrele, 36 Vaqar, 37 Ndroq, 38 Kavaje, 39 Karpen, 40 Spidhe, 41 Kryevideh, 42 Luzi i Vogel, 43 Rrogozhine, 44 Peqin, 45 Elbasan, 46 Cerrik, 47 Belsh, 48 Gramsh, 49 Divjake, 50 Lushnje, 51 Krutje, 52 Poshnje, 53 Ura Vajgurore, 54 Berat, 55 Kemishtaj, 56 Seman, 57 Libovshe, 58 Mbrostar, 59 Roskovec, 60 Kurjan, 61 Fier, 62 Patos, 63 Pojan, 64 Levan, 65 Prrrenjas, 66 Pogradec, 67 Maliq, 68 Korçe, 69 Polene, 70 Mifole, 71 Narte, 72 Orikum, 73 Ballsh, 74 Memaliaj, 75 Erseke, 76 Finiq, 77 Fusha Libohoves, 78 Mavropull, 79 Virua, 80 Butrint, 81 Vrine.

##### *Mauremys caspica rivulata* (Valenciennes, 1833) — Breshke uji, Breshkujce

Common in western Albania in the low and hilly regions which belong to the hilly and lowland Mediterranean climatic region (Fig. 2). It lives in watery surroundings with or without swamps, canals, pools, or streams, as well as in brackish water (Butrint, Shengjin) near the sea. It is abundant in the southern zone (Sarande), but very rare in the northern zone (Lezhe, Shkoder).

Localities: 1 Shkoder, 2 Berdise, 3 Torovice, 4 Shengjin, 5 Bregu i Matit, 6 Milot, 7 Mamurras, 8 Fushe Kruje, 9 Ishem, 10 Fushe Preze, 11 Vore, 12 Shijak, 13 Rrushkull, 14 Kashar, 15 Ndroq, 16 Golem, 17 Kavaje, 18 Karpen, 19 Rrogozhine, 20 Peqin, 21 Cerrik, 22 Lushnje, 23 Poshnje, 24 Pojan, 25 Mifole, 26 Narte, 27 Orikum, 28 Mavropull, 29 Finiq, 30 Butrint.

##### Testudinidae

##### *Testudo graeca iberia* Pallas, 1814 - Breshkë

May occur in southeastern Albania, the region of Korça. Two specimens caught at Prespa (Kallams) have morphologic characteristics which are similar to those of *T. graeca*, but there is also a finding of one specimen of *T. hermanni* (Haxhiu 1985) (Fig. 3).

Locality: 1 Prespa e Madhe.

***Testudo hermanni hermanni* Gmelin, 1789 — Breshka e zakonshme**

Common all over Albania from the sea coast up to the altitude of 1000 m (Fig. 4). It lives in various surroundings, bushy places, open forests, places with stones, rocks and bushes, streams, rivers and lakes as well as in gardens, where it feeds on cultivated plants and on fallen fruits. In the Mediterranean lowland climatic zone (Divjake, Golem, Kune) some specimens had fully developed eggs at the beginning of June. There were 4–9 eggs, whitish in colour and round.

On the plains and in hilly zones with intensive cultivation it is much rarer. In most natural, noncultivated zones it is very common and lives in high density.

Localities: 1 Hot, 2 Koplik, 3 Tarabosh, 4 Muriq, 5 Bregu i Bunes, 6 Tepe, 7 Kir, 8 Vau i Dejes, 9 Velipoje, 10 Bushat, 11 Barbullush, 12 Tropoje, 13 B. Curri, 14 Gryka e Valbones, 15 Llugaj, 16 Helshan, 17 Krume, 18 Kukes, 19 Bele e Poshteme, 20 Kolan, 21 Fushe Arrez, 22 Puke, 23 Kaçinar, 24 Karthpule, 25 Bicaj, 26 Bushtrice, 27 Zalldardhe, 28 Mali i Rrensit, 29 Shengjin, 30 Lezhe, 31 Bregu i Matit, 32 Rubik, 33 Rreshen, 34 Fushe Kuqe, 35 Milot, 36 Laç, 37 Mamurras, 38 Ishem, 39 Ulze, 40 Bruç, 41 Burrel, 42 Klos, 43 Bulqize, 44 Maqellare, 45 Muher, 46 Sillove, 47 Kastriot, 48 Peshkopi, 49 Manez, 50 Hamalle, 51 Rrushkull, 52 Bishti i Palles, 53 Vore, 54 Fushe Kruje, 55 Berxull, 56 Kashar, 57 Petrele, 58 Vaqar, 59 Peze, 60 Shijak, 61 Golem, 62 Karpen, 63 Spidhe, 64 Kavaje, 65 Rrogozhine, 66 Peqin, 67 Elbasan, 68 Labinot, 69 Librazhd, 70 Prrenjas, 71 Tushemisht, 72 Pogradec, 73 Voloreke, 74 Cerrik, 75 Belsh, 76 Lushnje, 77 Divjake, 78 Krutje, 79 Kemishtaj, 80 Libovshe, 81 Mbrostar, 82 Seman, 83 Pojan, 84 Levan, 85 Fier, 86 Patos, 87 Roskovec, 88 Kurian, 89 Poshnje, 90 Berat, 91 Gramsh, 92 Gjerbes, 93 Leshnice, 94 Prespe, 95 Maliq, 96 Korçe, 97 Polene, 98 Bilisht, 99 Shemetire, 100 Erseke, 101 Leskovik, 102 Kakruke, 103 Çorovode, 104 Ballsh, 105 Mallakaster, 106 Qafa Këçokut, 107 Mifole, 108 Sazan, 109 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 110 Orikum, 111 Kote, 112 Gjorm, 113 Memaliaj, 114 Tepelene, 115 Kelcyre, 116 Permet, 117 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 118 Picar, 119 Virua, 120 Libohove, 121 Vrisera, 122 Dhermi, 123 Himare, 124 Borsh, 125 Lukove, 126 Delvine, 127 Mavropull, 128 Çuke, 129 Ksamil, 130 Konispol.

***Testudo marginata* Schoepff, 1792 — Breshka malore**

It occurs in southwestern Albania (Fig. 5). We have found this species only in recent years in some places in the Sarande district. It lives in this zone in sympatry with *T. hermanni*. It prefers places with bushes and plants, with stones and rocks, and also lives in valleys with dense vegetation.

Localities: 1 Sarande, 2 Ksamil, 3 Butrint, 4 Mali i Stillos, 5 Konispol.

**Chelonidae*****Caretta caretta caretta* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Breshka me pllaka e detit**

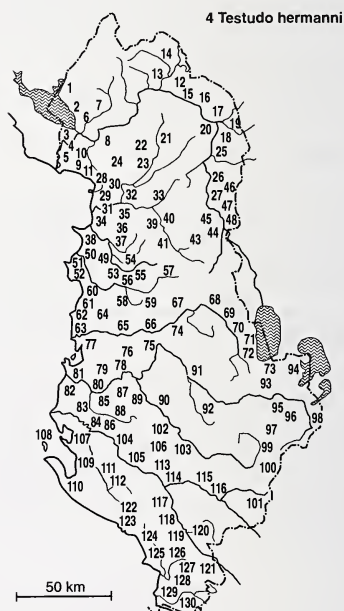
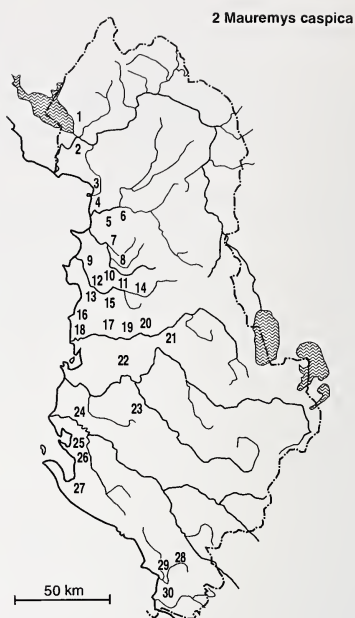
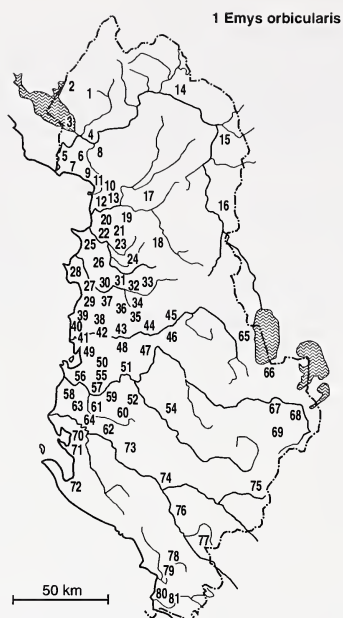
Occurs in the Ionian and Adriatic seas, and is the most common marine turtle of our country. This is evident from the fact that specimens of this species are caught by fishermen of all harbours along the Albanian coast. They were also caught during our fishing trips along the shores of the Adriatic sea (Velipoje, Kune, Bishti i Palles, Currila, Karpen) (Fig. 6). Furthermore, dead individuals were found on the beaches.

Localities: 1 Velipoje, 2 Shengjin, 3 Patok, 4 Lalez, 5 Durres, 6 Karpen, 7 Divjake, 8 Narte, 9 Vlore, 10 Himare, 11 Sarande.

***Dermochelys coriacea* (Vandelli, 1761) — Breshka lëkurore e detit**

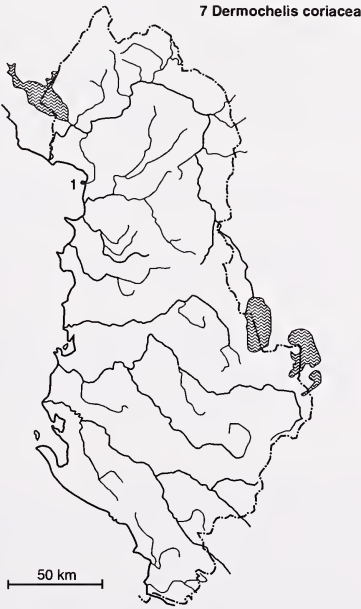
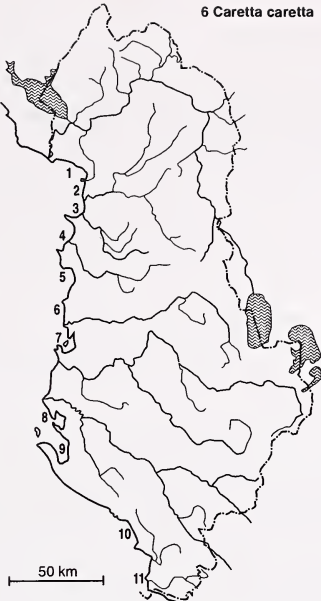
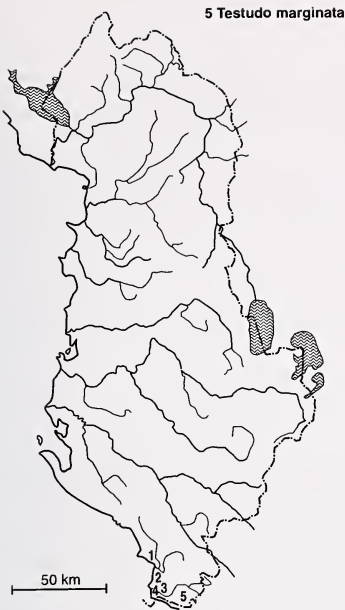
Very rare. So far only one individual has been caught by a fishing-boat in Shengjin (Fig. 7). The specimen is preserved in the Museum of Natural Sciences in Tirana (Haxhiu 1985; Zeko & Puzanov 1960).

Locality: 1 Shengjin.



Figs 1—37: Distribution maps of the reptilian species found in Albania.





## Sauria

### Gekkonidae

*Cyrtodactylus kotschy bibroni* (Steindachner, 1870) — Zhapiu me lara i shtëpisë

It occurs in the coastal zone from Shkoder to Vlore (Fig. 8). The northernmost limit of this species is Shkoder.

The animals prefer staying on the highest part of the walls and during the night under the roofs of old town houses. In those buildings they coexist with *Hemidactylus turcicus*. *C. kotschy* occupies the highest part of the buildings, while *H. turcicus* lives in the low parts beside the foundations. However, in buildings not inhabited by *C. kotschy*, *H. turcicus* lives in the upper regions more than lower down. Probably *C. kotschy* is in competition with *H. turcicus*. According to our observations *C. kotschy* is quicker and more skillful than *H. turcicus*. *H. kotschy* also is a competitor of *H. turcicus* for food. Egg laying was observed at the end of June; their number was 2—3.

Localities: 1 Shkoder, 2 Rozafat, 3 Lezhe, 4 Tirane, 5 Durres, 6 Kavaje, 7 Lushnje, 8 Vlore, 9 Uje i Ftoht (Vlore).

*Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Zhapiu i zakonshëm i shtëpisë

It has a broader geographic distribution than *C. kotschy* (Fig. 9). It lives in sunny places, in old houses, in torrents, basement flats, paved courtyards, etc.

Several times it was found in flats only a few years old, up to the fourth floor. This species has been reduced in the towns where many old buildings have been demolished to build the new ones. Egg laying was observed at the end of June (2 eggs).

Localities: 1 Shkoder, 2 Kala e Shkodres, 3 Lezhe, 4 Shengjin, 5 Tirane, 6 Durres, 7 Kavaje, 8 Elbasan, 9 Lushnje, 10 Fier, 11 Berat, 12 Vlore, 13 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 14 Sazan, 15 Dhermi, 16 Himare, 17 Borsh, 18 Gjirokaster, 19 Sarande, 20 Ksamil, 21 Butrint.

### Lacertidae

*Algyroides nigropunctatus* (Dumeril & Bibron, 1839) — Hardhuca e shkëmbinje

It is common all over Albania from the seashore up to the altitude of about 1500 m (Fig. 10). The northern boundary is not the Drini river in Albania, for we found it in the Alps, the northernmost places yet recorded. The horizontal and vertical distribution of this species in Albania is characteristic (Haxhiu 1991). In all other countries there is a smaller vertical distribution dimension.

It lives in rocky and stony places with rare plants, along streams and rivers. The number of individuals is small in most localities, but we found it with high frequency, 4—5 individuals per 20 square meters on Sazani island.

Localities: 1 Valbone, 2 Dragobi, 3 Klisyre, 4 Markaj (Bisheve), 5 Gryka Rodeshes, 6 Curraj i Poshtem, 7 Begaj, 8 Drin, 9 Tropoje, 10 Kulla e Lumes, 11 Kalimash, 12 Bele, 13 Koman, 14 Drin (Kukes), 15 Vau i Dejes, 16 Tarabosh, 17 Shengjin, 18 Rreshen, 19 Kulme, 20 Ulze, 21 Urake, 22 Muher, 23 Maqellare, 24 Shupenze, 25 Kruje, 26 Osum, 27 Tomor, 28 Ujanik, 29 Gjerbes, 30 Poliçan, 31 Burgullas, 32 Dobrushe, 33 Selan, 34 Therepel, 35 Kakruke, 36 Milove, 37 Leshnje, 38 Çorovode, 39 Veleshnje, 40 Osoje, 41 Çernishte, 42 Prespe, 43 Sazan, 44 Karaburun, 45 Kusbaba, 46 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 47 Orikum, 48 Dhermi, 49 Himare, 50 Piqeras, 51 Borsh, 52 Lukove, 53 Sarande, 54 Finiq, 55 Çuke, 56 Ksamil, 57 Butrint, 58 Stillo.

*Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758 — Zhapiu i ngathët

It has been found in the Alps, in the mountains of Kukes district (Koritnik, Gjallice, mountain near the village Shishtavec) and Mt Korabi, furthermore in the mountains of Gramshi (Fig. 11). It lives in the alpine meadows at the altitude of 1200—1800 m in places with stones and small bushes. Generally the populations are small. At the altitude 1750 m (Mt Korabi, Grame) we found females in the middle of July, with fully developed eggs. The number of eggs was 4—7, yellow in colour and round.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Shkelzen, 3 Shistavec, 4 Gjalice, 5 Korab.

***Lacerta trilineata* Bedriaga, 1886 — Zhapiu me tri vija**

It occurs in the lowland and hilly zones of the western part of Albania as well as in some mountainous zones of middle Albania (the Leshnja mountains) up to 1600 m altitude (Fig. 12). The northern boundary of distribution according to our present findings is in the hills from Lezhe (Shengjin) to Shkoder (Velipoja). It prefers places with bushes, stones and rocks, also sites near swamps. The populations have few individuals.

Localities: 1 Shkoder, 2 Lezhe, 3 Mali Shengjinit, 4 Mamurras, 5 Fushe Kuqe, 6 Fushe Kruje, 7 Vore, 8 Bërsh, 9 Petrele, 10 Qafe Krrabe, 11 Elbasan, 12 Berat, 13 Gramsh, 14 Fier, 15 Korçe, 16 Skrapar, 17 Vlore.

***Lacerta viridis* (Laurenti, 1768) — Zhapiu i gjelbër**

It can be found everywhere in Albania, from the littoral zone up to the high mountainous zones at about 1500 m (Mt Koritnik). In the Saranda district (Konispol) we found large individuals with a body length of 440 mm (Fig. 13).

It prefers various habitats: places with brushwood, stones and rocks, open wood, river banks and streams, garden fences, forests with pine trees, beech, oak, mixed woods etc. In the warm seashore zone it emerges from winter lethargy in the middle of March. In the lowland zones (Sarande: Bistricë, Butrint and Lezhe) we observed some individuals fully developed with eggs at the beginning of June. The number of eggs is 10–14; they are oval.

Localities: 1. Tamare, 2 Hot, 3 Bajze, 4 Koplik, 5 Tarabosh, 6 Vau i Dejes, 7 Bushat, 8 Velipoje, 9 Barbullush, 10 Mali i Shengjinit, 11 Lezhe, 12 Kune, 13 Karthpule, 14 Kaçinar, 15 Puke, 16. B. Curri, 17 Dragobi, 18 Tropoje, 19 Koritnik, 20 Kukes, 21 Bele e Siperme, 22 Gjalice, 23 Kam, 24 Fushe Arrez, 25 Sllave, 26 Muher, 27 Peshkopi, 28 Shupenze, 29 Bulqize, 30 Rreshen, 31 Bruç, 32 Ulze, 33 Burrel, 34 Qafe Shtame, 35 Milot, 36 Laç, 37 Mamurras, 38 Fushe Kuqe, 39 Ishem, 40 Manëz, 41 Fushe Kruje, 42 Hamallë, 43 Vore, 44 Bërsh, 45 Dajt, 46 Petrele, 47 Rrushkull, 48 Shijak, 49 Golem, 50 Karpen, 51 Spidhe, 52 Kavaje, 53 Vaqar, 54 Peze, 55 Rrogozhinë, 56 Peqin, 57 Elbasan, 58 Qafe Krrabe, 59 Labinot, 60 Librazhd, 61 Prrënjës, 62 Tushemisht, 63 Vloreke, 64 Cerrik, 65 Belsh, 66 Lushnje, 67 Divjake, 68 Krutje, 69 Kemishtaj, 70 Libovshë, 71 Mbrostar, 72 Seman, 73 Pojan, 74 Levan, 75 Fier, 76 Patos, 77 Roskovec, 78 Kurian, 79 Poshnje, 80 Berat, 81 Gramsh, 82 Gjerbes, 83 Leshnë, 84 Prespe, 85 Maliq, 86 Korçe, 87 Polene, 88 Bilisht, 89 Shemetirë, 90 Erseke, 91 Leskovik, 92 Kakrue, 93 Çorovodë, 94 Ballsh, 95 Mallakastër, 96 Qafa Këçokut, 97 Mifole, 98 Nartë, 99 Uji Ftohtë (Vlore), 100 Orikum, 101 Kote, 102 Gjorm, 103 Memaliaj, 104 Tepelene, 105 Këlcyre, 106 Permet, 107 Uji Ftohtë (Tepelene), 108 Picar, 109 Virua, 110 Libohovë, 111 Vriserë, 112 Llogara, 113 Dhermi, 114 Himare 115 Borsh, 116 Delvine, 117 Mavropull, 118 Ksamil, 119 Butrint, 120 Konispol.

***Lacerta vivipara* Jacquin, 1787 — Zhapiu që lind këlyshë**

It was found on Mt Korabi (near Panair) at an altitude of about 2200 m (Fig. 14). It probably occurs also in the other areas of Albania with grass, especially in the Alps.

Locality: 1 Korab.

***Podarcis erhardii* Bedriaga, 1882 — Hardhuca e gurëve**

We have found it in the Prespa region (Fig. 15). Certainly, it has a wider geographic distribution in Albania.

Locality: 1 Prespe.

***Podarcis melisellensis fiumana* Werner, 1891 — Hardhuca e vogël e gjelbër**

Found in the district of Tropoje in the valley of the Drini and Valbona Rivers (Fig. 16). It probably has a wider geographic distribution.

Locality: 1 Tropoje.

***Podarcis muralis* (Laurenti, 1768) — Hardhuca e mureve**

It is the most common species in Albania, as compared to all other species of the family Lacertidae. It lives everywhere in Albania, from the seashore up to about 2000 m altitude. In

some places there are dense populations, but quite often single individuals have been found (Fig. 17).

The surroundings of this species are very diverse: rocks, stony places, walls of houses, torrents, along railways and roads, in wood and trees, in garden fences, fields etc. This species has a great variation of morphology. That is why some authors distinguish 4 subspecies (*albanica*, *muralis*, *maculiventris*, *fusca*); however, to identify the subspecies of this species sophisticated methods are needed.

In the Mediterranean lowland climatic zone (Golem) we observed some individuals with fully developed eggs at the end of May, while in the mountain zone (Sllatina 1400 m, near Mt Korabi) they were observed only at the end of July. The number of eggs is 1–9, whitish in colour and oval.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Tamare, 3 Hot, 4 Bajze, 5 Koplik, 6 Theth, 7 Boge, 8 Bregu Bunes, 9 Tarabosh, 10 Ada, 11 Bushat, 12 Velipoje, 13 Torovice, 14 Vau i Dejes, 15 Koman, 16 Shkelzen, 17 Dragobi, 18 B. Curri, 19 Gosturan, 20 Tropoje, 21 Shengjin, 22 Tale, 23 Lezhe, 24 Karthpule, 25 Kaçinar, 26 Puke, 27 Fierze, 28 Qafa Malit, 29 Krume, 30 Koritnik, 31 Zapot, 32 Topojan, 33 Kukes, 34 Shishtavec, 35 Bicaj, 36 Vilze, 37 Kam, 38 Fushe Arrez, 39 Kurbesh, 40 Kthëlle e Eperme, 41 Rreshen, 42 Rubik, 43 Fushe Kuqe, 44 Milot, 45 Laç, 46 Mamurras, 47 Shkopet, 48 Ulze, 49 Bruç, 50 Lure, 51 Burrel, 52 Bulqize, 53 Kastriot, 54 Skavice, 55 Muher, 56 Cerem, 57 Slllove, 58 Peshkopi, 59 Maqellare, 60 Okshtun, 61 Ishem, 62 Manez, 63 Hamalle, 64 Vore, 65 Kruje, 66 Shperdhë, 67 Qafe Shtame, 68 Bërxull, 69 Dajt, 70 Petrele, 71 Bize, 72 Martanesh, 73 Qafe Krrabe, 74 Rrushkull, 75 Shijak, 76 Golem, 77 Karpen, 78 Spidhe, 79 Kavaje, 80 Rrogozhinë, 81 Vaqar, 82 Peqin, 83 Peze, 84 Paperr, 85 Elbasan, 86 Labinot, 87 Librazhd, 88 Prrenjas, 89 Pogradec, 90 Divjake, 91 Mbrostar, 92 Libovshe, 93 Kemishtaj, 94 Lushnje, 95 Krutje, 96 Belsh, 97 Cerrik, 98 Gramsh, 99 Gore, 100 Leshnice, 101 Maliq, 102 Prespa e Madhe, 103 Prespa e Vogel, 104 Korçë, 105 Bilisht, 106 Dardhë, 107 Polene, 108 Voskopojë, 109 Vithkuq, 110 Gjerbes, 111 Ostrovice, 112 Leshnje, 113 Tomor, 114 Sulove, 115 Shpat, 116 Seman, 117 Pojan, 118 Levan, 119 Fier, 120 Roskovec, 121 Poshnje, 122 Kurjan, 123 Patos, 124 Ballsh, 125 Qafa Këçokut, 126 Kakruke, 127 Mallakaster, 128 Memaliaj, 129 Trebeshinë, 130 Çorovodë, 131 Tepelene, 132 Kelcyre, 133 Permet, 134 Erseke, 135 Gramsh, 136 Leskovik, 137 Mifole, 138 Vlore, 139 Kote, 140 Sazan, 141 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 142 Karaburun, 143 Kuç, 144 Llogara, 145 Dhermi, 146 Himare, 147 Picar, 148 Virua, 149 Dhembel, 150 Çajup, 151 Libohovë, 152 Borsh, 153 Gjirokastër, 154 Lukovë, 155 Delvine, 156 Vrisera, 157 Mavropull, 158 Çuke, 159 Ksamil, 160 Konispol.

### *Podarcis taurica* Pallas, 1814 — Hardhuca e barit

It is quite common in Albania, however it prefers plains, hilly zones and valleys, rarely living as high as 1000 m. It lives in surroundings full of plants, in meadows, gardens, orchards, near woods, riversides, streams, and in sandy seashore zones (Fig. 18). In the Sarandë plains (Mavropull) we found very green individuals which probably belong to the subspecies *jonica*. In the littoral zone (Shengjin) we observed an individual fully developed by the end of May.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Koplik, 3 Tarabosh, 4 Bregu i Bunes, 5 Bushat, 6 Velipoje, 7 Shengjin, 8 Vau i Dejes, 9 Karthpule, 10 Puke, 11 Tropoje, 12 Kukes, 13 Peshkopi, 14 Milot, 15 Fushe Kuqe, 16 Laç, 17 Mamurras, 18 Ishem, 19 Hamalle, 20 Manez, 21 Vore, 22 Yzberisht, 23 Rrushkull, 24 Shijak, 25 Golem, 26 Karpen, 27 Kavaje, 28 Vaqarr, 29 Rrogozhinë, 30 Peqin, 31 Elbasan, 32 Divjake, 33 Mbrostar, 34 Libovshe, 35 Lushnje, 36 Labinot, 37 Pogradec, 38 Prespe, 39 Korçë, 40 Seman, 41 Pojan, 42 Levan, 43 Fier, 44 Mifole, 45 Nartë, 46 Sazan, 47 Vlore, 48 Orikum, 49 Mallakaster, 50 Memaliaj, 51 Permet, 52 Erseke, 53 Borsh, 54 Delvine, 55 Mavropull, 56 Vrinë.

## Scincidae

### *Ablepharus kitaibelii* Bibron & Bory, 1833 — Zhapiu me këmbë të vogla

It lives in the lowland zone of Albania (Fig. 18), and certainly also occurs in other regions. We found it in the pine-woods of Divjaka, in rocky and stony zones with little vegetation, but also in towns. During daytime it was hidden under the stones, and just at sunset, not yet too dark, it appeared from these places (observed in July and August).

Localities: 1 Kallmet, 2 Mali Shengjinit, 3 Karpen, 4 Divjake, 5 Vlore.



## Anguidae

### *Anguis fragilis* Linnaeus, 1758 — Kakzogeza

It is widespread throughout Albania, from the seashore to the mountain zones up to 1800 m (Lure, Koritnik. Korab). Two subspecies live in Albania: *A. fragilis fragilis* and *A. fragilis colchicus* (Fig. 20). It prefers humid sites: grassland, meadows, valleys, sites along brooks, rivers and lakes; it occurs in low frequency in dense woods. During the day it has been found under stones, in decaying trees and in soil. The young individuals have various colours and are quite different from the adult specimens.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Tamare, 3 Hot, 4 Theth, 5 Shkelzen, 6 Tropoje, 7 Fierze, 8 Koman, 9 Vau i Dejes, 10 Tarabosh, 11 Velipoje, 12 Shengjin, 13 Tale, 14 Zejmen, 15 Kallmet, 16 Karthpule, 17 Puke, 18 Fushe Arrez, 19 Koritnik, 20 Bele, 21 Kukes, 22 Shishtavec, 23 Qafe Malit, 24 Kthelle e Eperme, 25 Rreshen, 26 Rubik, 27 Fushe Kuqe, 28 Milot, 29 Laç, 30 Mamurras, 31 Kruje, 32 Qafe Shtame, 33 Ulze, 34 Bruç, 35 Lure, 36 Cerem, 37 Sllove, 38 Muher, 39 Kastriot, 40 Shupenze, 41 Bulqize, 42 Burrel, 43 Klos, 44 Martanesh, 45 Okshtun, 46 Ishem, 47 Hamalle, 48 Manez, 49 Vore, 50 Bexxull, 51 Kashar, 52 Petrele, 53 Rrushkull, 54 Golem, 55 Karpen, 56 Spidhe, 57 Kavaje, 58 Rrogozhine, 59 Peze, 60 Elbasan, 61 Dajt, 62 Labinot, 63 Librazhd, 64 Prrrenjas, 65 Pogradec, 66 Divjake, 67 Mbrostar, 68 Libovshe, 69 Kemishtaj, 70 Krutje, 71 Lushnje, 72 Belsh, 73 Cerrik, 74 Gramsh, 75 Voloreke, 76 Maliq, 77 Prespe, 78 Korçe, 79 Polene, 80 Bilisht, 81 Qafa e Qarrit, 82 Seman, 83 Pojan, 84 Levan, 85 Fier, 86 Patos, 87 Roskovec, 88 Kurian, 89 Poshnje, 90 Berat, 91 Ballsh, 92 Mallakaster, 93 Qafa e Këçikut, 94 Kakrue, 95 Memaliaj, 96 Çorovode, 97 Gjerbes, 98 Tepelene, 99 Kelcyre, 100 Permet, 101 Erseke, 102 Leskovik, 103 Mifole, 104 Vlore, 105 Karaburun, 106 Kote, 107 Llogara, 108 Dhermi, 109 Himare, 110 Borsh, 111 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 112 Picar, 113 Virua, 114 Libohove, 115 Vrisera, 116 Delvine, 117 Syu i Kalter, 118 Ksamil e Butrint, 119 Konispol.

### *Ophisaurus apodus* (Pallas, 1775) — Bullari

It occurs in fields and hilly regions of Albania from the seashore to an altitude of about 600 m (Kruje), from Hani i Hotit (north) to Konispol (south). It also enters the central area of Albania through the valleys of the rivers and through the hilly Mediterranean zone (Fig. 21).

The adult specimens are uniformly brown, while the young ones are light grey with dark transverse spots. It prefers places with stones, rocks and brushwoods, open woods, orchards, marsh zones densely overgrown with brush-wood.

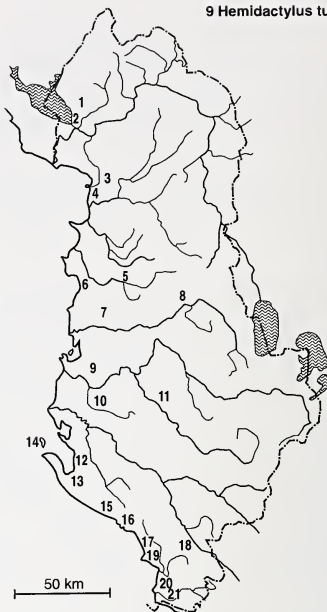
In many regions *O. apodus* is numerous. A typical example is Mt Shengjini, a rocky mountain covered with bushes (*Carpinus orientalis*, *Fraxinus ornus*, *Crataegus monogina*, *Cornus mas*, *Paliurus aculeatus*, *Punica granata*, *Quercus* sp., *Rubus ulmifolius*, *Salvia officinalis* etc.).

Localities: 1 Hot, 2 Bajze, 3 Koplik, 4 Tarabosh, 5 Bregu i Bunes, 6 Velipoje, 7 Bushat, 8 Vau i Dejes, 9 Karthpule, 10 Kallmet, 11 Shengjin, 12 Tale, 13 Zejmen, 14 Rubik, 15 Ulze, 16 Milot, 17 Patok, 18 Mamurras, 19 Ishem, 20 Hamalle, 21 Bilaj, 22 Vore, 23 Petrele, 24 Rrushkull, 25 Shijak, 26 Ndroq, 27 Golem, 28 Karpen, 29 Kavaje, 30 Peqin, 31 Elbasan, 32 Divjake, 33 Lushnje, 34 Belsh, 35 Mbrostar, 36 Libovshe, 37 Seman, 38 Pojan, 39 Levan, 40 Fier, 41 Poshnje, 42 Ballsh, 43 Mallakaster, 44 Tepelene, 45 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 46 Virua, 47 Mifole, 48 Narte, 49 Sazan, 50 Vlore, 51 Kote, 52 Orikum, 53 Dhermi, 54 Himare, 55 Borsh, 56 Sarande, 57 Mavropull, 58 Finiq, 59 Ksamil, 60 Butrint, 61 Konispol.

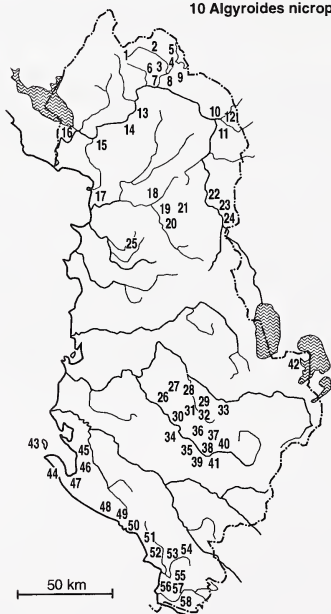
8 *Cyrtodactylus kotschyi*



9 *Hemidactylus turcicus*



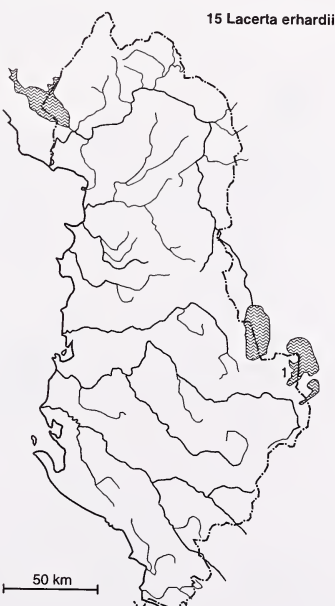
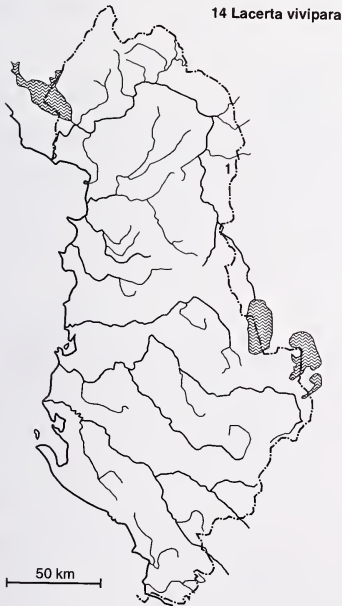
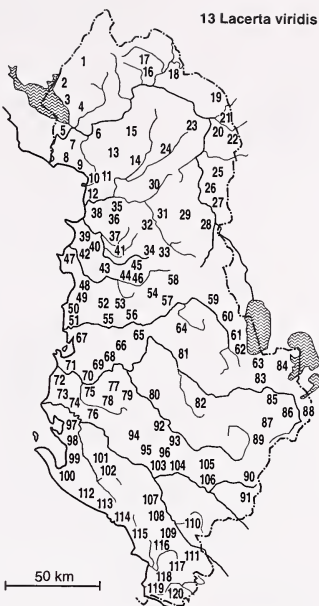
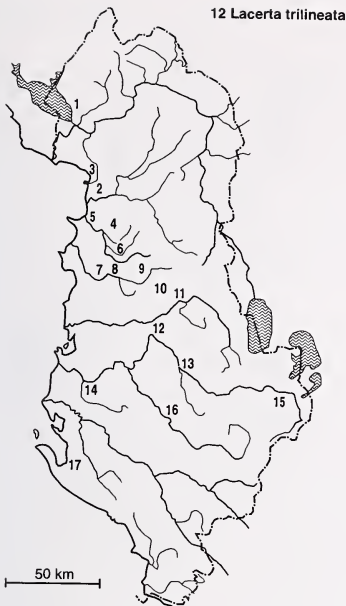
10 *Algyroides nicipunctatus*



11 *Lacerta agilis*



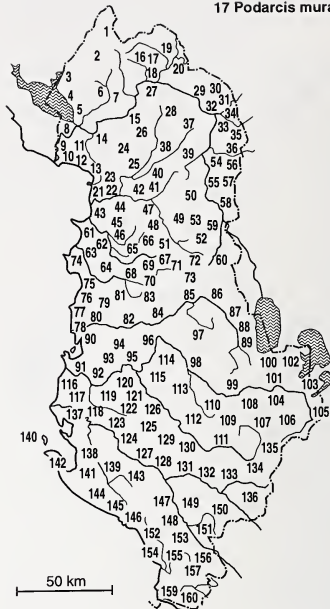
The Reptilia of Albania



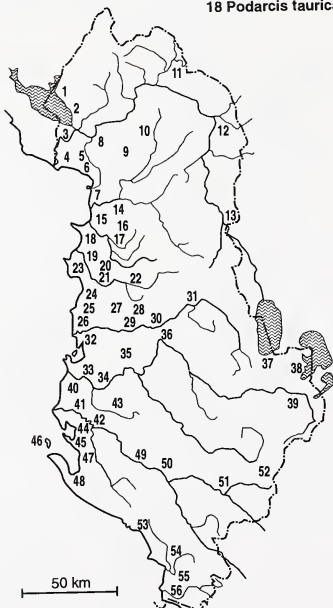
16 *Podarcis melisellensis*



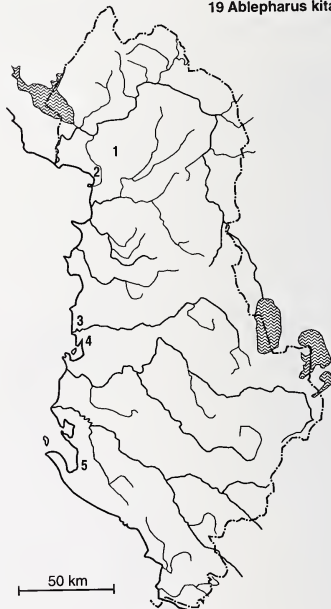
17 *Podarcis muralis*



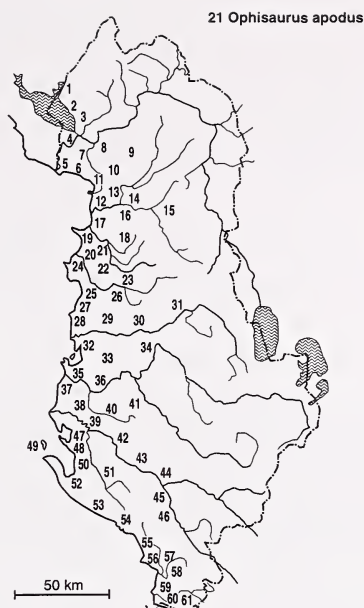
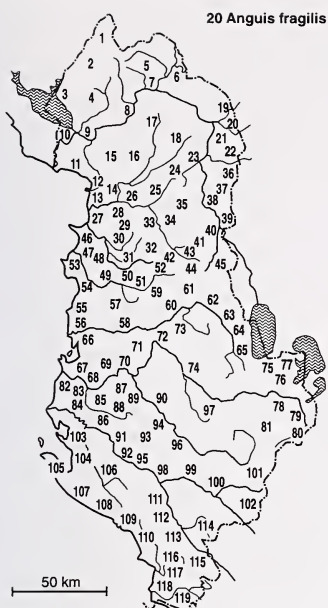
18 *Podarcis taurica*



19 *Ablepharus kitaibelii*







## Serpentes

### Typhlopidae

*Typhlos vermicularis* Merrem, 1820 — Gjarpri i verber krymbor

It is widespread in the plains and hilly zones of Albania (Fig. 22). It may also occur in other zones. Its habits include stony areas as well as woods and brushwoods, where it shelters under the stones. It also lives in places without stones in friable hilly ground.

Localities: 1 Vore, 2 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 3 Çuke, 4 Ksamil, 5 Butrint.

### Boidae

*Eryx jaculus turcicus* (Olivier, 1801) — Bolla

It is one of the rarest snakes in Albania and has a very limited distribution. So far it has been found only near Sarande (Fig. 23). It prefers places with stones, rocks and brushwood.

Localitiy: 1 Sarande.

### Colubridae

*Coluber caspius* Gmelin, 1789 — Shigjeta e gjatë

It occurs all over Albania from the seashore to an altitude of about 1500 m (Fig. 24). It is more common in the lowlands, hilly zones and rarer in mountainous regions. It lives in various places with brushwood along the rivers and streams, in gardens and orchards; places with stones and rocks.

Localities: 1 Tamare, 2 Hot, 3 Bajze, 4 Theth, 5 Tarabosh, 6 Bregu i Bunes, 7 Velipoje, 8 Torovice, 9 Vau i Dejes, 10 Koman, 11 Fierze, 12 Dragobi, 13 Tropoje, 14 Shengjin, 15 Zejmen, 16 Kallmet, 17 Karthpule, 18 Puke, 19 Koritnik, 20 Kukes, 21 Gjalice, 22 Qafa Malit, 23 Kurbnesh, 24 Rreshen, 25 Fushe Kuqe, 26 Laç, 27 Mamurras, 28 Qafe Shtame, 29 Bruç, 30 Bulqize, 31 Klos, 32 Lure, 33 Zalldardhe, 34 Cerem, 35 Kastriot, 36 Shupenze, 37 F. Bulqiza, 38 Okshatun, 39 Martanesh, 40 Bize, 41 Petrele, 42 Dajt, 43 Vore, 44 Manez, 45 Ishem, 46 Hamalle, 47 Rrushkull, 48 Golem, 49 Karpen, 50 Spidhe, 51 Kavaje, 52 Rrogozhine, 53 Peze, 54 Elbasan, 55 Labinot, 56 Librazhd, 57 Prrenjas, 58 Qafe Thane, 59 Divjake, 60 Mbrostar, 61 Libovshe, 62 Kemishtaj, 63 Krutje, 64 Lushnje, 65 Belsh, 66 Cerrik, 67 Gramsh, 68 Guri i Kuq, 69 Volo-reke, 70 Maliq, 71 Prespe, 72 Korçe, 73 Polene, 74 Bilisht, 75 Seman, 76 Pojan, 77 Levan, 78 Fier, 79 Patos, 80 Roskovec, 81 Kurjan, 82 Poshnje, 83 Berat, 84 Ballsh, 85 Mallakaster, 86 Qafa Këçokut, 87 Memaliaj, 88 Kakruke, 89 Gjerbes, 90 Tepelene, 91 Kelcyre, 92 Permet, 93 Erseke, 94 Leskovik, 95 Mifole, 96 Vlore, 97 Karaburun, 98 Kote, 99 Llogara, 100 Dhermi, 101 Himare, 102 Borsh, 103 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 104 Picar, 105 Virua, 106 Libohove, 107 Vrisera, 108 Delvine, 109 Syu i Kalter, 110 Ksamil, 111 Konispol.

***Coluber gemonensis gemonensis* (Laurenti, 1768) — Shigjeta e shkurtër**

It is found mainly in the lowlands and hilly zones and rarely in the mountainous zone up to an altitude of about 1100 m (Fig. 25). It prefers places with brushwood, open woods, stony areas and scrubland, furthermore woods along rivers, streams, lakes, also orchards, generally dry and wet places with rich vegetation.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Koplik, 3 Ada, 4 Bushat, 5 Fushe Kuqe, 6 Karthpule, 7 Tropoje, 8 Kukes, 9 Lezhe, 10 Shengjin, 11 Zejmen, 12 Rreshen, 13 Kastriot, 14 Shupenze, 15 Patok, 16 Milot, 17 Ulze, 18 Laç, 19 Mamurras, 20 Ishem, 21 Hamalle, 22 Vore, 23 Rrushkull, 24 Golem, 25 Karpen, 26 Kavaje, 27 Rrogozhine, 28 Elbasan, 29 Petrele, 30 Divjake, 31 Libovshe, 32 Lushnje, 33 Seman, 34 Fier, 35 Mifole, 36 Mallakaster, 37 Orikum, 38 Mavropull, 39 Ksamil, 40 Butrint.

***Coluber najadum* (Eichwald, 1831) — Shigjeta e hollë**

It lives in the plains and mountainous zones up to 1200 m altitude (Fig. 26). It is widespread but not numerous. It prefers zones with a variety of vegetation, stony, rocky and brushwood places.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Koplik, 3 Velipoje, 4 Bushat, 5 Tropoje, 6 Kukes, 7 Rreshen, 8 Laç, 9 Kruje, 10 Ishem, 11 Vore, 12 Dajt, 12a Qafe Krrabe, 13 Hamalle, 14 Rrushkull, 15 Spidhe, 16 Divjake, 17 Roskovec, 18 Ballsh, 19 Mali i Trebeshines, 20 Vlore (Kuzbaba).

***Coronella austriaca austriaca* Laurenti, 1768 — Gjarpri i zi**

Occurs mainly in the mountainous zones above 700 m (Fig. 27). It is rare within its range and has only local distribution. It prefers places with brushwood, stones and rocks, open woods. Its regular occurrence on Ada Island, as Bruno (1989) says, is highly unlikely. What Bruno described probably was a specimen that might have been brought down by chance from the mountainous areas to Ada Island by torrential waters of the Drini River; or it could have been a young individual of *Malpolon monspessulanus*, whose coloration is similar to that of *Cornella austriaca*.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Tamare, 3 Theth, 4 Shkelzen, 5 Dragobi, 6 Koritnik, 7 Shishtavec, 8 Gjalice, 9 Korab, 10 Grame, 11 Lure, 12 Bulqize, 13 Okshatun, 14 Qafe Shtame, 15 Martanesh, 16 Dajt, 17 Shengjergj, 18 Tomor, 19 Vithkuq, 20 Dardhe, 21 Trebeshine, 22 Llogara, 23 Çajup.

***Elaphe longissima* (Laurenti, 1768) — Bolla e shtëpisë**

It is very widespread from the seashore to the mountainous zones up to about 1400 m (Fig. 28). In the beech-woods of the mountainous zone, for example near the village Vermosh (Shkoder), we have found individuals with uniform coloration without white spots, while those in the plains and hilly zone have many white spots. It prefers various habitats and it can even be found in the houses beside the foundations, in old stone walls or under the roof. It lives on mice.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Tamare, 3 Hot, 4 Koplik, 5 Tarabosh, 6 Velipoje, 7 Mali Shengjinit, 8 Kune, 9 Kallmet, 10 Karthpule, 11 Koman, 12 Valbone, 13 Tropoje, 14 Kukes, 15 Peshkopi, 16 Bulqize, 17 Klos,

18 Rreshen, 19 Milot, 20 Mamurras, 21 Ishem, 22 Manez, 23 Kruje, 24 Vore, 25 Petrele, 26 Hamalle, 27 Golem, 28 Ndroq, 29 Spidhe, 30 Kavaje, 31 Rrogozhine, 32 Peze, 33 Elbasan, 34 Labinot, 35 Librazhd, 36 Prrenjash, 37 Qafe Thane, 38 Divjake, 39 Mbrostar, 40 Libovshe, 41 Kemishtaj, 42 Krutje, 43 Lushnje, 44 Belsh, 45 Cerrik, 46 Gramsh, 47 Guri i Kuq, 48 Vloreke, 49 Maliq, 50 Prespe, 51 Korçe, 52 Polene, 53 Bilisht, 54 Seman, 55 Pojan, 56 Levan, 57 Fier, 58 Patos, 59 Roskovec, 60 Kurian, 61 Poshnje, 62 Berat, 63 Ballsh, 64 Mallakaster, 65 Qafa e Këçikut, 66 Memaliaj, 67 Kakruke, 68 Gjerbes, 69 Tepelene, 70 Kelcyre, 71 Permet, 72 Erseke, 73 Leskovik, 74 Mifole, 75 Karaburun, 76 Vlore, 77 Kote, 78 Llogara, 79 Dhermi, 80 Himare, 81 Borsh, 82 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 83 Picar, 84 Virua, 85 Libohove, 86 Vrisera, 87 Delvine, 88 Syu i Kalter, 89 Ksamil, 90 Konispol, 91 Stillo.

***Elaphe quatuorlineata quatuorlineata* (Lacépède, 1789) — Bolla me katër vija**

It occurs mainly in the fields and hilly zones and is rare in the mountainous zones (Dajti mountains at about 1200 m). The easternmost locality is the district Skrapari (Fig. 29). The distribution is local. This species prefers rocky and stony places with bushes, woodland, often it creeps up trees. A female caught in the field and kept in captivity for about one month laid 4 eggs at the end of July.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Velipoje, 3 Kallmet, 4 Karthpule, 5 Mali i Shengjinit, 6 Kune, 7 Zejmen, 8 Rubik, 9 Milot, 10 Mamurras, 11 Fushe Kuqe, 12 Ishem, 13 Hamalle, 14 Kruje, 15 Manez, 16 Vore, 17 Dajti, 18 Ndroq, 19 Rrushkull, 20 Golem, 21 Spidhe, 22 Kavaje, 23 Rrogozhine, 24 Krrabe, 25 Labinot, 26 Divjake, 27 Lushnje, 28 Belsh, 29 Gramsh, 30 Seman, 31 Patos, 32 Berat, 33 Ballsh, 34 Mallakaster, 35 Qafa Këçikut, 36 Memaliaj, 37 Kakruke, 38 Gjerbes, 39 Çorovode, 40 Mifole, 41 Orikum, 42 Dhermi, 43 Himare, 44 Borsh, 45 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 46 Virua, 47 Libohove, 48 Syu i Kalter, 49 Delvine, 50 Ksamil, 51 Butrint, 52 Konispol.

***Elaphe situla* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Bolla laramane**

Lives in the fields and hilly regions. On the whole it is rare and local. Its favourite places are the rocky and stony zones with bushes. Until now our easternmost finds are in the districts of Puke and Skrapari (Fig. 30). Of the two subspecies *E. s. leopardinus* and *E. s. quadrilineata*, *E. s. leopardinus* is more common.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Tarabosh, 3 Velipoje, 4 Mali i Shengjinit, 5 Karthpule, 6 Puke, 7 Zejmen, 8 Milot, 9 Laç, 10 Mamurras, 11 Kruje, 12 Ishem, 13 Sharre, 14 Petrele, 15 Shënpjeter, 16 Spidhe, 17 Divjake, 18 Lushnje, 19 Berat, 20 Kakruke, 21 Ballsh, 22 Mallakaster, 23 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 24 Dhermi, 25 Himare, 26 Sarande, 27 Mavropull, 28 Ksamil.

***Malpolon monspessulanus insignitus* (Geoffroy, 1827) — Biroja**

It is widespread throughout the littoral zone from North to South, in the plain and in hilly areas, and is rather rare in the mountainous zones, especially near the Ionian coast. The highest-altitude finds were at about 1200 m, at the Llogaraja pass (Fig. 31). It penetrates valleys along the rivers, in the interior of the mountainous zones. The easternmost location so far is the village Gjerbes near Mt Tomorri. The adult specimens have the same coloration except for spots of different color on the sides. The young individuals have many additional spots on the dorsal and lateral surfaces. It lives in various places: sandy seashore, zones with scattered plants or brushwood and rarefield woods, in rocky and stony dry zones with brushwoods and woods, along rivers and streams, in orchards and gardens. The time of hibernation is short. Active specimens were found on sunny days at the beginning of December and in March in the Mediterranean lowland climatic zone.

Localities: 1 Bajze, 2 Koplik, 3 Tarabosh, 4 Velipoje, 5 Torovice, 6 Mali Shengjinit, 7 Vau i Dejes, 8 Karthpule, 9 Kallmet, 10 Lezhe, 11 Kune, 12 Rubik, 13 Rreshen, 14 Milot, 15 Fushe Kuqe, 16 Laç, 17 Mamurras, 18 Kruje, 19 Ishem, 20 Hamalle, 21 Manez, 22 Vore, 23 Priske, 24 Petrele, 25 Rrushkull, 26 Currila, 27 Ura Beshirit, 28 Peze, 29 Karpen, 30 Spidhe, 31 Kavaje, 32 Rrogozhine, 33 Peqin, 34 Labinot, 35 Divjake, 36 Mbrostar, 37 Libovshe, 38 Kemishtaj, 39 Krutje, 40 Lushnje, 41 Belsh, 42 Seman, 43 Pojan, 44 Levan, 45 Fier, 46 Patos, 47 Kurian, 48 Roskovec, 49 Poshnje, 50 Berat, 51 Ballsh, 52 Mallakaster, 53 Qafa e Këçikut, 54 Memaliaj, 55 Kakruke, 56 Gjerbes, 57 Çorovode, 58 Tepelene, 59 Mifole, 60 Vlore, 61 Sazan, 62 Karaburun, 63 Uji i Ftoht (Vlore), 64 Orikum, 65 Kote, 66 Llogara, 67 Dhermi, 68 Himare, 69 Borsh, 70 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 71 Virua, 72 Libohove, 73 Sarande, 74 Mavropull, 75 Syu i Kalter, 76 Vrisera, 77 Ksamil, 78 Butrint, 79 Stillo, 80 Konispol.



***Natrix natrix* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Bolluj**

Common all over Albania from the seashore up to 1700 m altitude (Lura Lake), probably even higher (Fig. 32). It lives in various watery surroundings such as swamps, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, streams, pools, as well as in gardens, near houses, in open woods. The most common subspecies in Albania is *N. n. persa*.

Localities: 1 Vermosh, 2 Tamare, 3 Hot, 4 Bajze, 5 Koplik, 6 Shiroke, 7 Bregu i Bunes, 8 Bushat, 9 Velipoje, 10 Torovice, 11 Shengjin, 12 Lezhe, 13 Kallmet, 14 Vau i Dejes, 15 Karthpule, 16 Koman, 17 Fierze, 18 Gryka Valbones, 19 Dragobi, 20 Tropoje, 21 Puke, 22 Fushe Arrez, 23 Krume, 24 Bele e Siperme, 25 Shtiqen, 26 Shistavec, 27 Kukes, 28 Çaje, 29 Vile, 30 Orosh, 31 Kthelle e Eperme, 32 Kurbnesh, 33 Rreshen, 34 Rubik, 35 Milot, 36 Fushe Kuqe, 37 Laç, 38 Mamurras, 39 Kruje, 40 Qafe Shtame, 41 Ulze, 42 Shkopet, 43 Bruç, 44 Lure, 45 Skavice, 46 Korab, 47 Zalldardhe, 48 Sllove, 49 Grame, 50 Muher, 51 Peshkopi, 52 Maqellare, 53 Shupenze, 54 Bulqize, 55 Okshtun, 56 Qarrisht, 57 Klos, 58 Burrel, 59 Ishem, 60 Manez, 61 Hamalle, 62 Vore, 63 Bexull, 64 Dajt, 65 Petrele, 66 Bize, 67 Martanesh, 68 Qafe Krrabe, 69 Rrushkull, 70 Shijak, 71 Golem, 72 Karpen, 73 Spidhe, 74 Kavaje, 75 Rrogozhine, 76 Vaqarr, 77 Peqin, 78 Peze, 79 Paperr, 80 Elbasan, 81 Labinot, 82 Librazhd, 83 Prrenjas, 84 Lin, 85 Guri Kuq, 86 Divjake, 87 Mbrostar, 88 Libosh, 89 Kemishtaj, 90 Lushnje, 91 Krutje, 92 Belsh, 93 Cerrik, 94 Gore, 95 Voloreke, 96 Leshnice, 97 Maliq, 98 Prespe e Madhe, 99 Plase, 100 Prespe e Vogel, 101 Bilisht, 102 Korçe, 103 Dardhe, 104 Polene, 105 Voskopoje, 106 Vithkuq, 107 Gjerbes, 108 Ostrovice, 109 Leshnje, 110 Tomor, 111 Sulove, 112 Shpat, 113 Seman, 114 Pojan, 115 Levan, 116 Fier, 117 Roskovec, 118 Kurian, 119 Poshnje, 120 Patos, 121 Ballsh, 122 Qafa Këçokut, 123 Kakruke, 124 Mallakaster, 125 Trebeshine, 126 Memaliaj, 127 Çorovode, 128 Tepelene, 129 Kelcyre, 130 Permet, 131 Erseke, 132 Gramoz, 133 Leskovik, 134 Mifole, 135 Narte, 136 Vlore, 137 Orikum, 138 Selenice, 139 Kote, 140 Kuç, 141 Llogara, 142 Dhermi, 143 Himare, 144 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 145 Picar, 146 Virua, 147 Borsh, 148 Gjirokaster, 149 Libohove, 150 Vrisera, 151 Lukove, 152 Delvine, 153 Mavropull, 154 Syu i Kalter, 155 Ksamil, 156 Butrint, 157 Stillo, 158 Konispol.

***Natrix tessellata* (Laurenti, 1768) — Gjarpri i vogël i ujit**

Distributed all over Albania, living in fresh water and sometimes also in brackish water of bays and lakes (Fig. 33). In some places (Lake Ohri, Lake Prespa) we have found it in great numbers, while in the rivers and streams it is rarer.

Often specimens have many dark spots. There are some with light spots only. In Lake Prespa all individuals are light grey and have no spots.

Localities: 1 Hot, 2 Bajze, 3 Koplik, 4 Ura Bunes, 5 Shiroke, 6 Bushat, 7 Ada, 8 Velipoje, 9 Torovice, 10 Lezhe, 11 Shengjin, 12 Tale, 13 Zejmen, 14 Kallmet, 15 Vau i Dejes, 16 Karthpule, 16a Tropoje, 17 Rubik, 18 Rreshen, 19 Kthelle e Eperme, 20 Kukes (Kenete), 21 Patok, 22 Fushe Kuqe, 23 Milot, 24 Laç, 25 Mamurras, 26 Shkopet, 27 Ulze, 28 Bruç, 29 Muher, 30 Shupenze, 31 Bulqize, 32 L. Okshtunit, 33 Ishem, 34 Manez, 35 Hamalle, 36 Vore, 37 Bexull, 38 Tapize, 39 Petrele, 40 Rrushkull, 41 Shijak, 42 Golem, 43 Karpen, 44 Spidhe, 45 Kavaje, 46 Rrogozhine, 47 Vaqarr, 48 Peqin, 49 Peze, 50 Paperr, 51 Elbasan, 52 Labinot, 53 Librazhd, 54 Prrenjas, 55 Lin, 56 Guri Kuq, 57 Pojske, 58 Pogradec, 59 Voloreke, 60 Kallamas, 61 Prespa e Madhe, 62 Leshnice, 63 Maliq, 64 Prespa e Vogel, 65 Bilisht, 66 Divjake, 67 Mbrostar, 68 Libovshe, 69 Kemishtaj, 70 Lushnje, 71 Krutje, 72 Belsh, 73 Cerrik, 74 Seman, 75 Pojan, 76 Levan, 77 Fier, 78 Roskovec, 79 Kurian, 80 Poshnje, 81 Kakruke, 82 Milove, 83 Gjerbes, 84 Korçe, 85 Leshnje, 86 Ostrovice, 87 Erseke, 88 Ballsh, 89 Mallakaster, 90 Memaliaj, 91 Tepelene, 92 Kelcyre, 93 Permet, 94 Leskovik, 95 Mifole, 96 Narte, 97 Orikum, 98 Kote, 99 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 100 Gjirokaster, 101 Libohove, 102 Borsh, 103 Vrisera, 104 Syu i Kalter, 105 Çuke, 106 Butrint, 107 Lumi Pavlo.

***Telescopus fallax* (Fleischmann, 1831) — Gjarpri me lara**

Living in the plain and hilly zones. The most central region in which we have found it is in the district Skrapari. It occurs in places with brush-woods, in stony and rocky places with sparse vegetation, on old walls of fortresses, houses, in gardens, orchards (Fig. 34).

Localities: 1 Tarabosh, 2 Velipoje, 3 Kakariq, 4 Kallmet, 5 Mali Shengjinit, 6 Lezhe (Kala), 7 Zejmen, 8 H. i Gjuetise, 9 Rubik, 10 Rreshen (Kulme), 11 Milot, 12 Laç, 13 Mamurras, 14 Kruje, 15 Rrushkull, 16 Manez, 17 Ishem, 18 Preze, 19 Vore, 20 Bexull, 21 Petrele, 22 Durres, 23 Shijak, 24 Golem, 25 Peze, 26 Spidhe, 27 Kavaje, 28 Rrogozhine, 29 Peqin, 30 Elbasan, 31 Divjake, 32 Mbrostar, 33 Kemishtaj, 34 Lushnje, 35 Krutje, 36 Belsh, 37 Seman, 38 Levan, 39 Fier, 40 Roskovec, 41 Kurian, 42 Berat,



43 Kakruke, 44 Mifole, 45 Vlore, 46 Orikum, 47 Kote, 48 Tepelene, 49 Dhermi, 50 Himare, 51 Gjirokaster, 52 Lukove, 53 Çuke, 54 Mavropull, 55 Ksamil, 56 Butrint.

### Viperidae

#### *Vipera ammodytes* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Nepërka

It is the most common and widespread snake among all other species, and occurs from the seashore to an altitude of about 1800 m (Mt Gramma near Korab) (Fig. 35). The most common subspecies in Albania is *V. a. meridionalis*. It lives in various places: places with brushwood, open woods, orchards, gardens, alongside woods, rivers, lakes and streams, stony and rocky places with dense or open brushwoods. In August and September it is generally up in the branches of trees and shrubs with ripe fruits, waiting there to prey on birds and mice.

Another typical feature of this species is that the time of hibernation is very short, shorter than in all other species of snakes. Active specimens were found on sunny days even at the beginning of December (in the lowland).

Localities: 1 Seferçe, 2 Skrapatushe, 3 Vermosh, 4 Lepushe, 5 Tamare, 6 Hot, 7 Bajze, 8 Koplik, 9 Theth, 10 Boge, 11 Kir, 12 Tarabosh, 13 Bregu i Bunes, 14 Bushat, 15 Velipoje, 16 Torovice, 17 Mali Shengjinit, 18 Valbone, 19 Dragobi, 20 Klisyrë, 21 Markaj, 22 Gryka e Radeshes, 23 Curraj, 24 Gosturan, 25 Kulla Lumes, 26 Tropoje, 27 Kune, 28 Tale, 29 Kalaja Lezhës, 30 Kallmet, 31 Vau i Dejes, 32 Karthpule, 33 Koman, 34 Puke, 35 Fushe Arrez, 36 Qafa Malit, 37 Krume, 38 Koritnik, 39 Kalimash, 40 Gjalice, 41 Shishtavec, 42 Patok, 43 Fushe Kuqe, 44 Milot, 45 Laç, 46 Mamurras, 47 Kruje, 48 Rubik, 49 Orosh, 50 Kthelle e Eperme, 51 Lan Lure, 52 Kurbnesh, 53 Rreshen, 54 Shkopet, 55 Ulze, 56 Bruç, 57 Lure, 58 Skavice, 59 Korab, 60 Zalldardhe, 61 Grame, 62 Muher, 63 Peshkopi, 64 Maqellare, 65 Shupenze, 66 Okishtun, 67 Bulqize, 68 Martanesh, 69 Klos, 70 Ballgjaj, 71 Burrel, 72 Qafe Shtame, 73 Dajt, 74 Bize, 75 Petrele, 76 Bexull, 77 Vore, 78 Manez, 79 Ishem, 80 Hamalle, 81 Rrushkull, 82 Shijak, 83 Golem, 84 Karpen, 85 Spidhe, 86 Shtraze, 87 Kavaje, 88 Rrogozhinë, 89 Vaqarr, 90 Peqin, 91 Peze, 92 Paperr, 93 Elbasan, 94 Labinot, 95 Librazhd, 96 Qarrisht, 97 Prrernjas, 98 Qafe Thane, 99 Lin, 100 Pojske, 101 Divjake, 102 Mbrostar, 103 Libovshe, 104 Kemishtaj, 105 Lushnje, 106 Krutje, 107 Belsh, 108 Cerrik, 109 Gore, 110 Pogradec, 111 Voloreke, 112 Leshnice, 113 Maliq, 114 Prespa e Madhe, 115 Prespa e Vogel, 116 Bilisht, 117 Korçe, 118 Dardhe, 119 Polene, 120 Voskopoje, 121 Vithkuq, 122 Shtyllë, 123 Ostrovice, 124 Leshnje, 125 Tomor, 126 Sulove, 127 Gramsh, 128 Berat, 129 Shpat, 130 Seman, 131 Pojan, 132 Levan, 133 Fier, 134 Roskovec, 135 Kurian, 136 Poshnje, 137 Patos, 138 Ballsh, 139 Qafa e Këçikut, 140 Kakruke, 141 Mallakaster, 142 Trebeshinë, 143 Memaliaj, 144 Çorovodë, 145 Tepelene, 146 Kelcyre, 147 Permet, 148 Perparim, 149 Qafa Qarrit, 150 Gramoz, 151 Erseke, 152 Leskovik, 153 Mifole, 154 Nartë, 155 Vlore, 156 Selenice, 157 Karaburun, 158 Orikum, 159 Kote, 160 Llogara, 161 Kuç, 162 Dhermi, 163 Himare, 164 Çike, 165 Uji i Ftoht (Tepelene), 166 Kudhas, 167 Picar, 168 Dhembel, 169 Borsh, 170 Virua, 171 Lunxheri, 172 Lukove, 173 Gjirokaster, 174 Libohovë, 175 Delvine, 176 Vrisera, 177 Mavropull, 178 Çuke, 179 Butrint, 180 Stillo, 181 Konispol.

#### *Vipera berus* (Linnaeus, 1758) — Neperka e malit me vija tenderprera

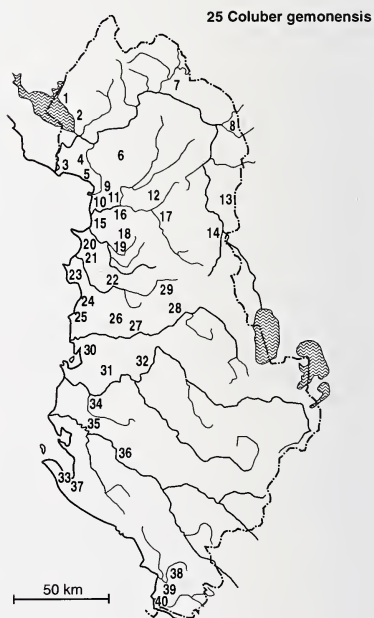
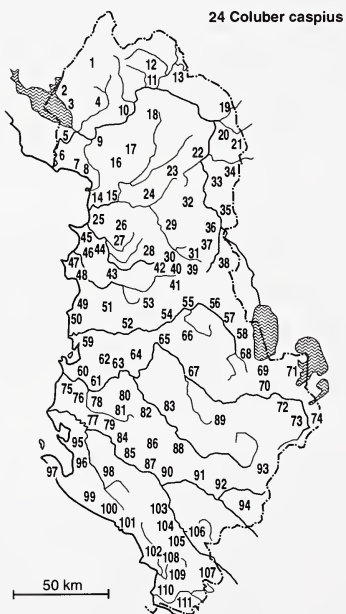
We encountered *V. berus* in Alpine and northeastern zones (Shishtavec-Morava mountains) (Fig. 36). It lives in mountainous zones above 1500 m altitude; sometimes it is isolated, especially in the Alpine meadows with small brushwoods of *Juniperus*. One individual caught at Mt Morava had scales entirely restricted to the upper part of the head (pileus). The specimens we have studied are no longer than 450 mm. It is likely that this species occurs in other mountains too, especially in the south. The subspecies *V. b. bosniensis* is typical of Albania.

Localities: 1 Shkelzen, 2 Shishtavec.

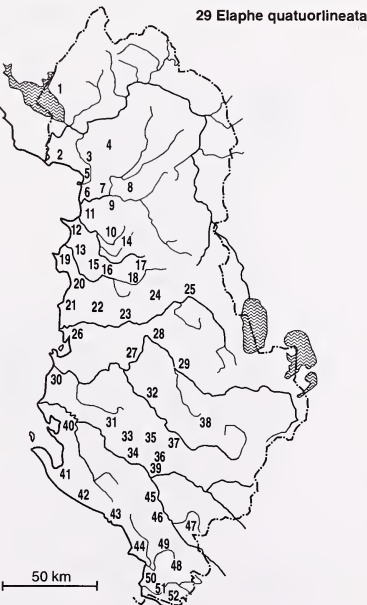
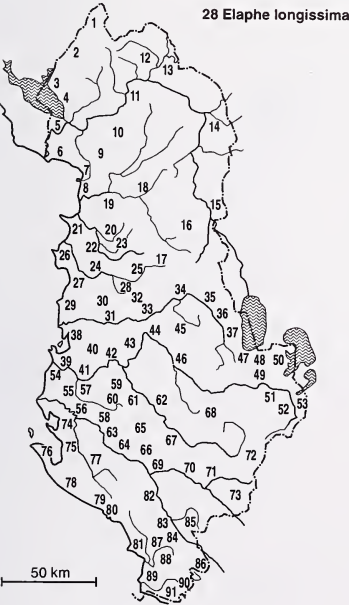
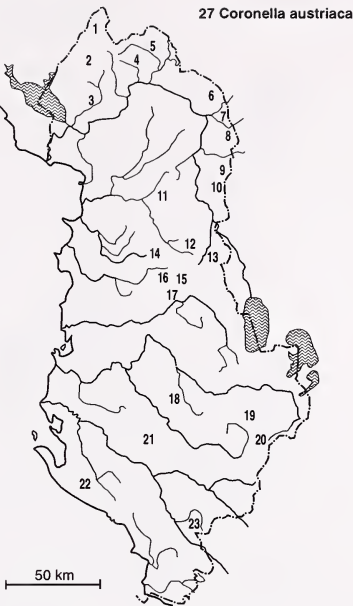
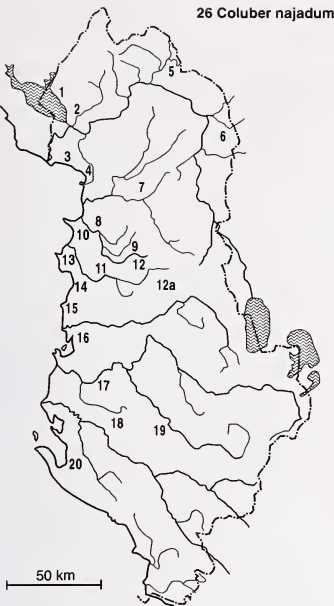
#### *Vipera ursinii ursinii* (Bonaparte, 1835)

We have found it in the Alps and on Mt Korabi so far, always above 1500 m (Fig. 37), and rarely isolated. It prefers the Alpine meadows, using the burrows of small mice as accommodation. It is possible that it also lives in the southernmost mountainous zones. In a meadow on Mt Korabi (Rrafshë, on July 27, 1977) we have observed 9 individuals of *V. ursinii* in an area of 400 m. In that place the meadow was inclined and exposed to the sun; there were numerous plants growing on it. We found 6 embryos in the oviduct of a female.

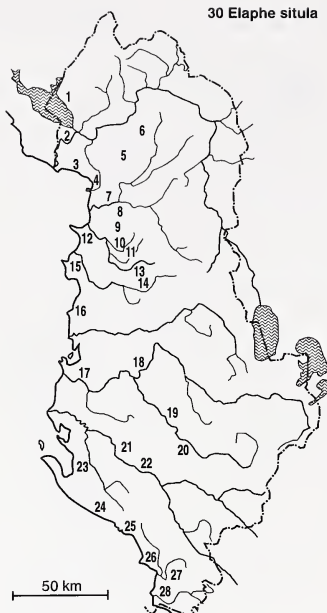
Localities: 1 Shkelzen, 2 Korab.



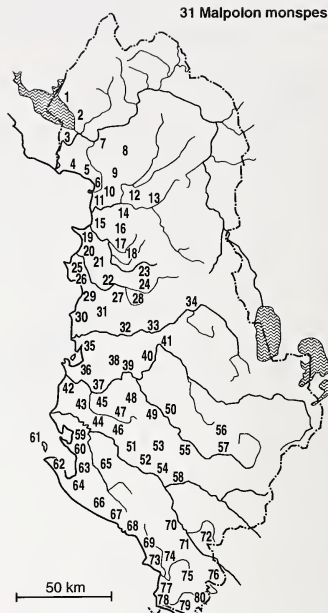
The Reptilia of Albania



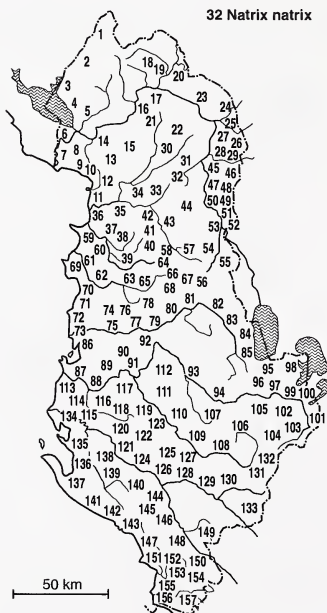
30 *Elaphe situla*



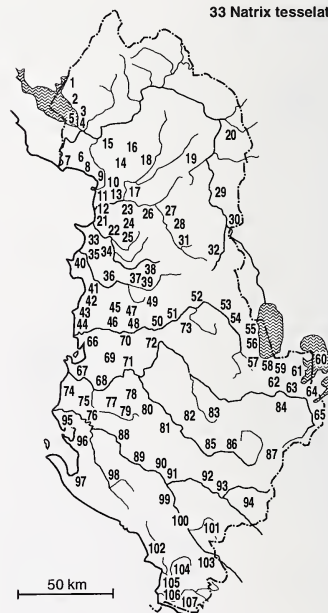
31 *Malpolon monspessulanus*



32 *Natrix natrix*



33 *Natrix tessellata*

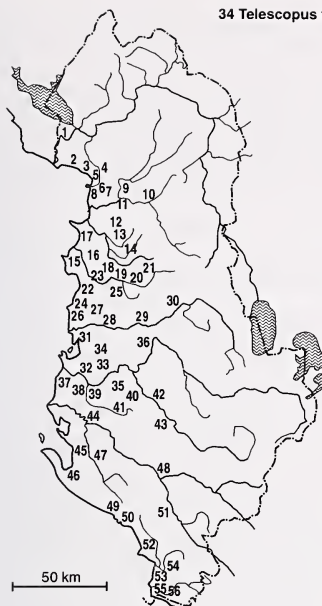




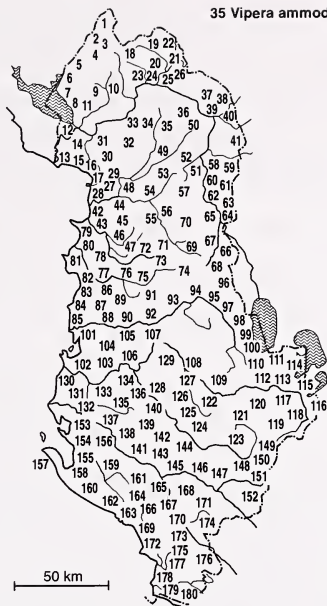
# The Reptilia of Albania

55

34 *Telescopus fallax*



35 *Vipera ammodytes*



36 *Vipera berus*



37 *Vipera ursinii*



### Discussion

The number of reptilian species found in Albania is large: 37 species, with distinct habitats and ranges of distribution. A small number of species (*L. vivipara*, *L. agilis*, *C. austriaca*, *V. berus* and *V. ursinii*) prefer only high mountains and are adapted to live in the Mediterranean mountainous climatic zone. Two of them (*L. vivipara* and *V. berus*) are very rare and limited to the high mountains. Eight other species of reptiles (*M. caspius*, *T. marginata*, *C. kotschy*, *H. turcicus*, *A. kitaibelii*, *O. apodus*, *E. jaculus*, *T. vermicularis*) are characteristic only in the Mediterranean lowland climatic zone. Two of them (*T. marginata* and *E. jaculus*) are restricted to the district of Sarande and the other six species have a wider range of distribution, from Shkoder in the north to Sarande in the south. Bruno (1986, 1989) refers to *C. kotschy* and states that Vlore is the northern boundary of distribution of this species, but it has a wider distribution and occurs from Vlore in the south to Shkoder in the north. Also, there are some species (*E. orbicularis*, *T. hermannii*, *L. trilineata*, *L. viridis*, *C. gemonensis*, *C. najadum*, *E. quatuorlineata*, *E. situla*, *M. monspessulanus*, *N. tessellata* and *T. fallax*) that have a wide range. Obviously they are adapted to live in all climatic zones, not only in the Mediterranean mountainous zone. Seven species (*A. nigropunctatus*, *P. muralis*, *A. fragilis*, *C. caspius*, *E. longissima*, *N. natrix* and *V. ammodytes*) live in all climatic zones of Albania, although some of them are rare in the Mediterranean mountainous climatic zone.

Bruno (1986, 1989) refers to *A. nigropunctatus* and mentions that perhaps this species lives in Alpine zones. I found it in several regions of the Alps. Many reptile species (*E. orbicularis*, *M. caspicus*, *O. apodus*, *L. viridis*, *C. gemonensis*, *E. situla*, *M. monspessulanus*, *V. ammodytes* etc.) have become rare in lowland and hilly zones as a result of deterioration of the natural environment and of intensive agriculture.

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### Zusammenfassung

Der Bericht über die Reptilien in Albanien enthält die Ergebnisse von ausgedehnten Felduntersuchungen, die vor allem zwischen 1976 und 1991, aber auch noch danach ausgeführt wurden und die sich auf die Gebiete von der Meeresküste bis auf die hohen Berge erstreckten. 37 Arten wurden nachgewiesen; der Nachweis von *Testudo graeca* ist allerdings noch nicht sicher. Die Fundorte sind benannt. Für die meisten Arten werden auch Angaben zur Biologie und Ökologie gemacht.

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